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REMARKS

The present application has been amended in response to the Examiner's Office Action to place the application in condition for allowance. Applicant, by the amendments presented above, has made a concerted effort to present claims which clearly define over the prior art of record, and thus to place this case in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected to the claims for lack of patentable utility and also rejected the claims as being anticipated by an article entitled "Advanced RF Metrology for Plasma Process Control" (Cournou).

The claims have been amended in order to overcome the Examiner's rejections. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the now pending claims are allowable.

Claim 1 now specifically claims using an RF signal monitor to monitor the RF signal as the RF signal is used to ignite the plasma and to calculate a value based on the RF signal. Also claimed is to integrate the value and plot the integrated value to determine effects of a pre-determined parameter. Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 1, as amended, claims statutory subject matter.

Claim 1 now specifically claims a method which includes the steps of igniting plasma using an RF signal, using an RF signal monitor to monitor the RF signal as the RF signal is used to ignite the plasma and to calculate a value based on the RF signal, integrating the calculated value over a period of time, and plotting the integrated value to determine effects of a pre-determined parameter. Applicant respectfully submits that the article cited by the Examiner neither discloses nor suggests this. The article is effectively akin to the prior art method

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disclosed at page 4, lines 8-13, and does not disclose integrating a calculated value over a period of time, and plotting the integrated value to determine effects of a pre-determined parameter. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over the Coumou article.

Applicant respectfully submits that the dependent claims further distinguish the present invention from that which is disclosed in the Coumou article. Specifically, claim 3 specifically claims plotting the integrated value to determine etch rate, claim 4 specifically claims plotting the integrated value to determine at least one etch chamber condition, claim 5 specifically claims plotting the integrated value to determine at least one of pressure, flow and gap spacing associated with an etch chamber, and claim 6 specifically claims using a device separate from the RF signal monitor to integrate a plurality of parts of the RF signal. Applicant respectfully asserts that none of this is disclosed nor suggested by the Coumou article.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims of the application are allowable over the rejections of the Examiner. Should the present claims not be deemed adequate to effectively define the patentable subject matter, the Examiner is respectfully urged to call the undersigned attorney of record to discuss the claims in an effort to reach an agreement toward allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

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